

REMARKS

I. Formalities

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119, and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document submitted on March 11, 2004.

Applicants also thank the Examiner for considering the references cited with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 11, 2004.

However, the Examiner did not indicate whether the Formal Drawings filed on March 11, 2004 are accepted. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge and approve the aforementioned Formal Drawings.

II. Status of the Application

By the present amendment, Applicants amend claim 15. Claims 1-15 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-15 have been rejected.

The present amendment addresses each point of objection and rejection raised by the Examiner. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,176,590 to Prevost et al. (hereinafter “Prevost”). Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner’s rejections for *at least* the reasons set forth below.

A. Independent Claim 1

In response to Applicants’ previous arguments that Prevost fails to disclose or suggest the feature of “wherein said dimming control decreases said effective value of the voltage applied to

said light source to the threshold value over a predetermined period of time,” as recited in claim 1, the grounds of rejection allege that period of the angle of rotation of the steering wheel between 30° and 5°, as disclosed in Prevost, corresponds to the recited “a predetermined period of time.”

However, Applicants respectfully submit that Prevost provides no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever regarding the feature of a dimming control which decreases the effective value of the voltage applied to a light source to a threshold value over a predetermined period of time. In fact, Prevost discloses quite the opposite—that the voltage supplied to the left-hand light 2 is decreased as a function of the angle of rotation of the steering wheel, as the driver of the vehicle rotates the steering wheel from 30° to 5°. (See Figure 4).

More particularly, Prevost discloses that the lights 2 are extinguished when the angle of rotation of the steering wheel is below 5°. (Column 3, lines 38-41). Further, Prevost discloses that the light 2, which is situated on the side towards which the vehicle is turning, is supplied with a voltage that increases progressively from a minimum value V_{\min} , until it reaches a maximum supply value V_{\max} for an angle of rotation which is 30°. (Column 3, lines 41-47).

Therefore, Prevost teaches that the control unit 3 controls the supply voltages to the left-hand bend lighting driving light 2 and to the corresponding right-hand light 2 as a function of the angle of rotation of the steering wheel. (Column 3, lines 31-35). Indeed, Prevost explicitly discloses that Figure 4, which is relied upon by the grounds of rejection, “is a graph showing the supply voltage for the driving lights having the bend lighting function in the system of FIGS. 1 and 2, as a function of the angle of rotation of the steering wheel of the vehicle.” (Column 2,

lines 21-24; Figure 4). Thus, contrary to the recitations of claim 1, Figure 4 of Prevost discloses that each of the lights 2 is supplied with a voltage which either increases or decreases depending on the angle of rotation of the steering wheel.

Furthermore, Prevost fails to disclose or suggest that the period of time over which the steering wheel rotates from 30° to 5° is predetermined in any way. To the contrary, one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize from the disclosure provided in Prevost that the period of time over which the steering wheel rotates from 30° to 5° is spontaneously determined by the variable torque which is applied to the steering wheel by the driver of the vehicle as the vehicle proceeds around a bend. (See column 2, line 46 – column 3, line 50 Figure 3; Figure 4). Indeed, the grounds of rejection have failed to point to any specific portion of Prevost that discloses or suggests that the period of time over which the steering wheel rotates from 30° to 5° is predetermined before the rotation from 30° to 5° begins.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 is not anticipated by (i.e. is not readable on) the applied Prevost reference for *at least* these independent reasons. Further, Applicants submit that the dependent claims 2-7 are allowable *at least* by virtue of their dependency on claim 1.

B. Independent Claim 8

In view of the similarity between the requirements of independent claim 8 and the requirements discussed above with respect to independent claim 1, Applicants submit that arguments analogous to the foregoing arguments as to the patentability of independent claim 1 demonstrate the patentability of independent claim 8. As such, Applicants submit that claim 8 is

patentably distinguishable over Prevost *at least* for reasons analogous to those presented above. Further, Applicants submit that the dependent claims 9-14 are allowable *at least* by virtue of their dependency on claim 8.

C. Independent Claim 15

In view of the similarity between the requirements of independent claim 15 and the requirements discussed above with respect to independent claim 1, Applicants submit that arguments analogous to the foregoing arguments as to the patentability of independent claim 1 demonstrate the patentability of independent claim 15. As such, Applicants submit that claim 15 is patentably distinguishable over Prevost *at least* for reasons analogous to those presented above.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Serial No. 10/797,110

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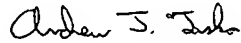
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